

*Science and Art, Dept. of,
Leeds School of Design 1857.*

*1698
137.A.*

Box X, 97.E

97.E Box 0168

REPORT

OF THE

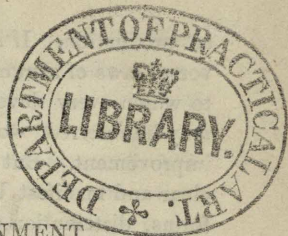
COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNMENT

SCHOOL OF DESIGN,

LEEDS,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1851.

THE year 1851 will long be memorable for its eventful character in connexion with Art and Manufactures; the Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations, magnificent in itself, vast in its immediate effects, as a stimulus to the industry and taste of the civilized world, occupies a place in our annals in relation to the future progress of the Arts, of surpassing interest and importance. Every attempt previously made to arouse the attention of manufacturers or the public, to the question of art in connexion with industrial production, as one of a grave practical nature in respect to commerce, and wide and deep significance as affecting social improvement, had received only a tardy and spiritless response. The Committee would not be understood to impute a total supineness on the part of the manufacturers, to the means of imparting beauty to articles of ordinary use, and to those applied to purposes of comfort or luxury, whose grateful influences are so much enhanced by the graceful application of decorative art. The manufacturer has, it is true, produced abundance of goods intended to captivate the taste of the public, but, notoriously, with the most variable success; every new article or pattern being put forth experimentally, its construction or design has no well defined and obvious concordance with any general principle of art, and as the tastes of the many are proverbially fickle and capricious, the manufacturer is but too prone to deem success or failure a purely fortuitous affair. This, in the opinion of the Committee, is the fatal error in manufacturing



art production. If it were true that there are no definite and universal laws of symmetry, form, proportion, and harmony of color, to which every development of art, but decorative art especially, may be referred, we might despair of any certain advance towards improvement. But the more the subject is investigated, the more clear and manifest becomes the truth that those arrangements of forms, distribution of members, effect of light and shade (when these are concerned), harmony of colour, and appropriateness of grouping, when pleasing in their effect upon the eye, and in consonance with the inner sense, are all reconcileable with principles, the operation of which is universally felt, though perhaps not easily reduced to verbal expression. The anomalies in decorative art, commonly ascribed to caprice or fashion, frequently afford the best illustration of the universality of the laws of Art. For instance, an elaborate design displaying great fertility of idea proves abortive, and some scattering of zigzags, or, apparently, random sprinkling of colours, in dabs or blotches, becomes greatly in favor, and this is taken as a proof, either that there is no principle, or that the public is not under its influence. More closely examined, such an example may prove an excellent illustration of the universality of the laws of art, for the elaborate design may be too distant from the eye to give any impression but that of "a maze without a plan," or if satisfactory in this respect, the arrangement of color is probably offensive, while the other, though uncouth and extravagant in its elementary forms, may exhibit these in such symmetrical grouping as with a proper distribution of tints to give a most agreeable *tout ensemble*. Thus it will be obvious that in decorative, as indeed in every other branch of art, its refinements must be applied consistently with propriety and good sense.

The Committee conceive that the Exhibition afforded the most valuable practical lessons on all these points. It brought the products of rival nations and manufacturers in juxtaposition; it afforded all parties, not blinded by prejudice, an opportunity of detecting the sources of their strength and weakness, and, offering so wide a range for comparison, it tended to render the design of the ornamentist, more catholic, and to extinguish that narrow rivalry which plumed itself on the attainment of some technical superiority of production, instead of aiming at absolute excellence.

Whatever doubts might exist regarding the advantages likely to

accrue from good schools of practical art, previously to the Great Exhibition taking place, these could not fail to be dispelled upon a moment's reflection regarding its general results, and this has been evidenced by the spontaneous expression of opinion from so many parties, that some institution to give methodical assistance to productive skill should be established. Now so far as the artistic element of manufactures is concerned, the Schools of Design pretty well occupy the ground, and in the opinion of the Committee they only require fostering, extending, directing properly, and that they should receive the hearty support of the manufacturing interest and the public, to become highly beneficial to the community at large. With respect to the Leeds School of Design, the Committee cannot but regret that its advantages to the town are not more fully appreciated. The progress made by the pupils has been upon the whole highly satisfactory, and the influence of such a school on the general taste of the town, in matters of industrial as well as universal art, must, however gradually it may operate, be extensive and valuable. A most interesting addition has been made to the School during the latter half of the year, by the introduction, at the suggestion of the Committee of Council on Education, and with the express recommendation of the Board of Trade, of Classes for instructing Schoolmasters and Pupil Teachers in elementary Drawing, with a view to its introduction in the schools to which they are attached. Eight masters and twenty-one pupil teachers in the National Schools of Leeds, have availed themselves of the privilege, and have taken up the study with a great deal of diligence.

The managers of schools for the children of the working classes, would do well to visit this class during the hours of meeting, from $7\frac{1}{4}$ to $9\frac{1}{4}$ in the evening, and they would not then fail, the Committee believe, to urge on the teachers under their influence, the necessity of qualifying themselves to introduce a new and valuable element of instruction into the School. The Committee cannot but believe that if it were now generally known that this class is open to all the Masters and Pupil Teachers of Schools intended for the education of the children of the operatives, it would be more numerous attended. The Committee would like to have the means of largely extending this department of the school, for they feel persuaded that if a good knowledge of drawing, on sound prin-

ciples, were diffused among the children of working people, it would supply pupils to the Schools of Design who had already mastered the elementary portion of the art, and who would be prepared to proceed at once with the higher branches and those more immediately allied to practical design; moreover, it would help to develop those special aptitudes which many boys possess for making this acquisition, and altogether it would tend to increase the skill of the workman in any department of mechanical production, and prove eminently serviceable to all classes. The Committee have the satisfaction of stating that in pursuance of a suggestion from Mr. Poynter, the Inspector of the Schools, they have made arrangements with the Committee of the Leeds Mechanics' Institution, by which the pupils of the school will obtain instruction in practical Geometry in the class connected with that Institution, any pupils of the latter class desiring to study free-hand drawing being admitted to the School of Design, under special regulations.

With regard to the finances of the school, they are in a much sounder position than they occupied prior to the commencement of the year, and the Committee have much pleasure in acknowledging the assistance received towards the liquidation of an arrear of debt which had encumbered the school since its establishment, and which had been occasioned by the outfit charges not having been adequately provided for at first. It will be seen on reference to the Financial statement appended to this Report, that the Committee have been placed in a position to liquidate the debt of £179 owing to the bankers, and they have every reason to hope that the great interest recently awakened in relation to those practical arts, which it is the purpose of such institutions to foster and improve, will produce amongst all classes in the town, a corresponding disposition to countenance and assist the Leeds School of Design, and make its teaching more extensively available in the cultivation of every form of decorative art. The school being now out of debt, all that is required to render it one of the most useful institutions in the town, is an annual subscription of sufficient amount to afford the Committee the means of giving full scope to the capabilities of the Institution. The Committee feel anxious that the manufacturers of Leeds should take a more lively interest in the School, by visiting and bringing others to visit it occasionally, and when convinced that such an establishment may be made a most valuable instru-

ment in the general improvement of manufactures, and the taste to appreciate them in Leeds and its neighborhood, it is to be hoped that the liberal support of the Leeds School of Design will become a duty, and the Committee do not hesitate to say that the success and utility of the School would be proportionate to its increased income. They would especially direct attention to the desirableness of instituting a few prizes in connexion with the School. Experience has shown that the pupils attend the School until they have acquired some facility in drawing, and then they leave it and pursue their studies unassisted, or it may be neglect them altogether. This is to be regretted on account of the elementary character to which it limits the productions of the School, and the imperfect training with which inexperienced persons are apt to leave it, and thus discredit its teaching. Now the Committee feel persuaded, and they are strongly confirmed in their opinion by that of Mr. Gaunt, that a few prizes adjusted to the several gradations of attainment among the pupils, would have a most salutary effect, stimulating their application to study, and inducing them to continue in the school; for there cannot be a doubt that the acquisition of one of these prizes, besides being an honorary distinction, might prove a useful test of the capability of its possessor for many kinds of occupation. The Committee, as at present advised, would not propose money prizes, they would rather present a suitable medal, or books of value in connexion with art, either of which would be a permanent record of the pupil's successful prosecution of his studies. The Committee are happy to find that the Board of Trade have determined to present medals to the exhibitors and pupils who send the best drawings or models up for annual inspection in London, and much good may be anticipated from this, but the local rewards, constantly employed as a stimulus in several other schools, are still, in the opinion of the Committee, highly desirable.

Leeds Government School of Design.

NUMBER OF PUPILS ENTERED ON THE BOOKS DURING THE YEAR 1851.

MALES.	{ Morning Class	...	...	...	...	20
	{ Evening Class	...	...	...	...	90
						110
FEMALES.	Afternoon Class	...	...	...	...	36
	Total	...	...	...	...	146

Number of Male Pupils...	...	...	...	...	...	110
„ Female do.	...	...	...	...	...	36
						146

AVERAGE NUMBER ON THE BOOKS PER MONTH.

MALES.	{ Morning Class	...	...	...	...	7
	{ Evening Class	...	...	...	...	33
						40
FEMALES.	Afternoon Class	...	...	...	...	18

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE.

MALES.	{ Morning Class	...	...	...	...	6
	{ Evening Class	...	...	...	...	22
						28
FEMALES.	Afternoon	...	...	...	...	16

OCCUPATIONS OF MALE PUPILS.

Architects	...	...	...	...	3
Book-keeper	...	...	...	...	1
Coach Painter	...	...	...	...	1
Clerks	...	...	...	...	2
Intended Designers for Paper	...	...	...	...	5
Do. Local Manufactures	...	...	...	...	6
Engineers	...	...	...	...	4
Engravers	...	...	...	...	6
Ironmonger	...	...	...	...	2
Land Surveyor	...	...	...	...	1
Chemist	...	...	...	...	1
Gardener	...	...	...	...	1
Mechanics	...	...	...	...	2
Railway Porter	...	...	...	...	1
Masons	...	...	...	...	3
Painters and Decorators	...	...	...	...	15
Plasterers	...	...	...	...	2
Schoolmasters, National	...	...	...	...	8
Stone Carvers	...	...	...	...	2
Schoolboys	...	...	...	...	12
Teachers in National School	...	...	...	...	21
Upholsterers	...	...	...	...	2
Wood Carvers	...	...	...	...	3
Woollen Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	2
Tailor	...	...	...	...	1
Marble Mason	...	...	...	...	1
Joiners	...	...	...	...	2

AGES OF MALE PUPILS.

From 12 to 15 Years	...	...	...	...	30
15 to 20	„	...	...	...	34
20 to 25	„	...	...	...	29
25 to 30	„	...	...	...	20
30 to 40	„	...	...	...	4
40 to 50	„	...	...	...	2

OCCUPATIONS OF FEMALE PUPILS.

Educating as Governesses	...	...	...	...	6
Teachers in National School	...	...	...	...	0
Undetermined	...	...	...	...	30
					36

AGES OF FEMALE PUPILS.

From 12 to 15 Years	...	...	...	...	7
15 to 20	„	...	...	...	17
20 to 25	„	...	...	...	6
25 to 30	„	...	...	...	4
30 to 40	„	...	...	...	2

SUMMARY OF CASH ACCOUNT

FROM DECEMBER 21ST, 1850, TO DECEMBER 31ST, 1851.

INCOME.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£.	s. d.		£.	s. d.
To Balance ... ..	...	74 12 8	By Balance due to Bankers', Dec., 1850 ... ..	...	179 5 8
Donations... ..	...	128 2 0	Porter, Cleaning, &c. ... ..	...	39 11 0
Subscriptions ... ..	...	90 19 6	Salary—Master ... ..	...	225 0 0
	219	1 6	Coals, &c. ... ..	...	5 5 10
Government Grants ... ..	...	...	Conversazione, 1850	7 13 7	
Pupils' Fees ... ..	...	200 0 0	Sundries	4 5 3	
Conversazione, 1850 ... ..	...	54 7 2			11 18 10
	9	5 6	Advertisements ... ..	...	21 18 6
			Printing ... ..	...	3 9 6
			Gas ... ..	...	7 4 1
			Rent ... ..	...	40 0 0
			Repairs ... ..	...	4 7 7
			Bankers' Interest ... ..	...	0 19 0
			Do. Commission ... ..	...	0 13 11
			Balance at Bankers'	1 3 5	
			Do. in hand	16 9 6	
					17 12 11
					£557 6 10

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

OF THE

Leeds School of Design

FOR 1852.

PRESIDENT.

THE MAYOR OF LEEDS.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

SIR GEO. GOODMAN, M.P. Rt. Hon. M. T. BAINES, M.P.

JAMES KITSON,

(President of the Leeds Mechanics' Institution and Literary Society.)

COMMITTEE.

JOHN ATKINSON.
JOSEPH BATESON.
JOHN BINGLEY.
REV. G. W. CONDER.
F. DANBY.
T. DAWSON.

J. I. IKIN.
E. IRWIN.
FRANCIS LUPTON.
JOHN WAGER.
THOMAS WILSON.

SECRETARY.

W. H. J. TRAICE.

APPENDIX.

The following communications recently received from the Board of Trade, are of so much importance in connection with the future prospects of Schools of Ornamental Art, and especially as offering direct encouragements to the pupils in Local Schools, that the Committee have deemed it desirable to give publicity to these documents, by appending them to the last year's Report.

DEPARTMENT OF PRACTICAL ART,
MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, PALL MALL, LONDON,
12th Day of July, 1852.

Sir,

I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, to inform your Committee of Management, that they are of opinion that the appointments to Masterships of Drawing Schools, which are about to be established generally throughout the country, will be most satisfactorily filled up by students who have been trained in the Schools of Ornamental Art, who shall have proved their ability to hold this office, and who are above eighteen years of age.

The salaries of these Masterships will commence at not less than £70 a-year, and if the Master should become distinguished in the performance of his duties, he may reasonably look forward to promotion to higher Masterships in Schools of Ornamental Art. Candidates will be examined in London, and enter a class for learning the art of teaching; and my Lords will allow to each candidate £1 a-week towards his expenses during the period of his preparation in London.

My Lords are desirous that these appointments, with their present and prospective advantages, should be held by students as well of the Local Schools as of the Central Schools; and I am to request that your Committee, will, after communication with your Head Master, who is responsible for the artistic ability of the Students, report to me from time to time, the name of any students who may wish to become candidates for this office; transmitting

to me specimens of the works which they have recently executed. It is desirable that they should have some knowledge of Practical Geometry and Perspective. The names of candidates will be registered; and a selection will be made from time to time of those who appear most eligible.

I am, Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

W. R. DEVERELL,

SECRETARY.

To the Secretary of the

Leeds School of Ornamental Art.

DEPARTMENT OF PRACTICAL ART,

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, PALL MALL, LONDON,

30th Day of July, 1852.

[Circular to Head Masters.]

Sir,

I am instructed by the Board of Trade to remark to you, that during the late exhibition of the works of students at Marlborough House, a selection of the best of those works were arranged and exhibited according to the classes, or stages of the course of instruction; and that this having been useful to students and interesting to the public, as showing clearly the adopted course of teaching, the superintendents of the department recommend that a similar collection and arrangement of drawings, &c. be made as far as practicable, a permanent and public exhibition in each school. I am to add, that it is desirable to use for illustration the prize drawings of the students, as far as they go; and that where the requisite illustrations for any class or stage cannot be supplied by the works of students, they should, if possible, be supplied by the master, in order that the series of examples may be made complete.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. R. DEVERELL.

SECRETARY.

To T. Gaunt, Esq., Head Master,

Leeds School of Ornamental Art.

DEPARTMENT OF PRACTICAL ART,

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, PALL MALL, LONDON,

August 21st, 1852.

[Scholarships—Local Schools.]

Sir,

I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy of Council for Trade to acquaint you that, the arrangements of the

Department will shortly be sufficiently completed to allow of a limited number of advanced Students being selected from some of the principal Local Schools, who will have the opportunity of prosecuting their studies in the Metropolis—the advantage of attending Lectures, and of inspecting the Metropolitan Museums and Collections of Manufactures.

In the recent competition, the Examiners, Sir Charles Eastlake, Mr. Maclise, and Mr. Redgrave, awarded several medals to your School, in respect of works in Classes, or Stages of Instruction, subsequent to No. 5, which my Lords view as evidence that there are probably Students in your School qualified to hold Scholarships in London. I am accordingly directed to offer to your Committee the privilege of recommending any advanced Students who have received such medals, and who may be desirous of becoming Candidates for having the benefit of a Scholarship, which will be given, subject to the Rules which accompany this letter, and the holder of it will receive an allowance at the rate of £40 a year, from the 1st of October, 1852, to the 31st of March, 1853, when the Candidate will be eligible for re-election.

It should be clearly understood that, in thus inviting Students to study in the Metropolis, the Department is to be chargeable only with the *instruction* of the Student, and not as responsible for any kind of superintendence over him when he is not pursuing his studies; at the same time the General Superintendent will be ready to give any advice and suggestion on this point which may be in his power; and, perhaps, when it is known what Students from the Local Schools have been elected to these Scholarships, some arrangements may be made among them for residence together, &c., if it should be desired.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WALTER RUDING DEVERELL,

SECRETARY.

To the Secretary of the

Leeds School of Ornamental Art.



